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**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

Applicants : Hoffmann et al

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**PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT**

Mail Stop PCT  
Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

Applicant respectfully calls to the Examiner's attention the amended set of claims that are attached to the application.

Applicant respectfully requests that the claims be amended, without prejudice, without admission, without surrender of subject matter, and without any intention of creating any estoppel as to equivalents, as follows: